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SUBJECT: MFA BRIEFING ON EAST ASIA SUMMIT, CHINA-ASEAN
MEETINGS AND PREMIER WEN'S STATE VISIT TO THE
PHILIPPINES

Summary

1. On December 6, Assistant Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai held a special press briefing outlining Premier Wen Jiabao's upcoming planned state visit to the Philippines and Chinese participation in ASEAN-related events in Cebu from December 11-15. Wen will attend the East Asia Summit, China-ASEAN meeting, ASEAN-plus-Three meeting and will chair the Northeast Asian Leaders Trilateral Meeting before finishing the trip with a State Visit. The DPRK nuclear issue, energy security and trade will be among the key issues discussed, he said. Answering reporter's questions, Cui said China remains willing to be in touch with the United States about the EAS even though the United States is excluded from the Summit. End Summary.

East Asia Summit

2. PM Wen will head a PRC delegation that includes Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, Commerce Minister Bo Xilai and others for the second East Asia Summit (EAS) and other upcoming ASEAN-related meetings in Cebu, Philippines, AFM Cui said. China views the December 13 EAS as an open and inclusive platform for East Asian communication and cooperation, not in competition with ASEAN. Energy security will be high on the agenda and China believes there is room for cooperation in this field among the 16 participating countries. China will also discuss the orientation of future summits and make proposals in priority areas including avian flu, trade, finance, disaster relief and education, Cui said.

Northeast Asian Trilateral Leaders Meeting

3. PM Wen will chair the seventh China-Japan-ROK Leaders Meeting, during which he will meet with Japanese PM Abe, Cui said. Resumption of these trilateral meetings promotes peaceful development and security in the region, Cui said. The meeting will promote trilateral cooperation and China will make proposals for specific cooperative projects in political, economic, trade and cultural fields. Responding to a reporter's question, Cui said the meeting would also discuss the DPRK nuclear issue. China-Japan bilateral issues will not be a central element of the meeting, but the interaction between Chinese and Japanese leaders since the agreement in October to overcome political obstacles (e.g. Yasukuni issue) indicates that relations continue to develop in a positive direction, Cui said.

ASEAN-Plus-Three Summit

¶4. The tenth ASEAN-Plus-Three Summit on December 11 will review past cooperation while planning to strengthen and deepen future cooperation between ASEAN and its northeast Asian partners. China will make proposals on disaster relief, women's issues, finance and poverty relief. China hopes to take advantage of next year's Tenth Anniversary of the ASEAN-Plus-Three Summit to create strategic plans and to solidify ASEAN-Plus-Three as a main channel of East Asian regional cooperation.

10th ASEAN-China Summit

¶5. Wen's participation in the tenth ASEAN-China Summit December 11 will build on consensus reached between Wen and ASEAN leaders in the November China-ASEAN 15th Anniversary meeting hosted by China in Nanning. The meeting will discuss material assistance by China to ASEAN, review recent progress and develop concrete plans for next year. Three documents will be signed, although Cui did not disclose their content or subject-matter.

State Visit to the Philippines

¶6. At the invitation of President Arroyo, PM Wen will pay a state visit to the Philippines following the ASEAN meetings. PM Wen will work to deepen Beijing's strategic cooperative relationship with Manila and

BEIJING 00024344 002 OF 002

will meet President Arroyo, Vice President de Castro, Senate President Villar and Speaker of the House de Venecia. Agreements concerning economic cooperation, trade, infrastructure and cultural protection will be signed. AFM Cui expressed China's concern about the welfare of the Philippine people in the aftermath of Typhoon Durian and noted that China has made a USD 250,000 donation to relief efforts.

U.S. An Important Part of Asian Affairs But Not In EAS

¶7. A reporter asked AFM Cui if there would be representatives from the United States attending the meetings in Cebu in light of what the reporter described as the unease caused last year when the United States was not invited. Cui said he has often discussed East Asian cooperation with his United States counterparts and China recognizes that the United States is an important cooperative partner with close ties to the region. The regional cooperation symbolized by the EAS is open, gradual and mutually beneficial, he said. It is complementary, not exclusive. The United States has interests in the region and China welcomes such non-regional countries to enhance their cooperation with East Asian cooperative mechanisms, Cui said.